

Pivotal Year for Future of Presbytery

2008 is shaping up to be a pivotal year. It is a leap year. It is an Olympic year. It is a presidential election year. It is a General Assembly year. And it is a year that we in the Presbytery of San Diego will be making some important decisions about the future direction of our ministry. There are three key questions that we need to be discussing as we begin this new year:

What is God doing in our communities?

What does God want to do in our communities?

What is our role – where does God want us to join Him in what He is doing here?

In Luke 12:54-56, Jesus says to the crowds, “When you see a cloud rising in the west, you say at once, ‘A shower is coming.’ And so it happens. And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, ‘There will be scorching heat,’ and it happens. You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?”

Jesus’ words emphasize the importance of assessing our current situation. Where are we? How did we get here? What are our people ready for? How much can they handle right now? We need to be realistic about our present situation and anticipate what is ahead. It is important to pray and discuss what the next steps are that Christ wants us to take into the future. What are the obstacles and opportunities He has put in front of us? Where is the Holy Spirit leading us to go? These questions can never be answered in isolation or in a vacuum, but only within the community of God’s people.

As we embark on this process together, we have some key events coming up that will help us move forward. On Tuesday, January 15, we will have a presbytery meeting at First Presbyterian in San Diego. I will be leading a pre-presbytery meeting beginning at 1 pm for us to consider what presbyteries have historically done. Based on this, we will discuss what we want our presbytery to focus on in the future. I hope you will help us with this conversation if you are available at that time. On January 25-26, we will have a leadership retreat for the Presbytery Council, the Way Forward Work Group, and a few others. Alan Roxburgh will return to lead this retreat with us as we map out where we are as a presbytery and what our next steps into the future will be. And on Saturday, February 2, we will have a Leadership Development Day entitled “We’re not in Kansas Anymore.” This will be held from 8 am – 2 pm at the Fletcher Hills Presbyterian Church, and will be a time to equip ourselves for some of the challenges that lay ahead of us.

Please pray for us this month and this year. I am looking forward to seeing what God will do. The challenges ahead of us are great. But God is great. And we can be great together. If you will join us in this process, we will be stronger because of your

involvement. As each person shares their sense of where the Holy Spirit is leading us, the clearer our future directions will become. Let's have a great year together!

Clark Cowden